

Brighton & Hove City Council

Culture, Heritage, Sport, Tourism & Economic Development Committee

Agenda Item 40

Subject: Pride Five Year Review

Date of meeting: 8th December 2023

Report of: Executive Director Economy, Environment and Culture

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Ward(s) affected: All

For general release

1. Purpose of the report and policy context

- 1.1 This report sets out plans for Pride in 2024 and outlines ambitions for 2025-2028. It provides a brief review of the operational and financial challenges/opportunities since the last review was carried out in 2019.
- 1.2 The provision of a 5 year consent is vital to the event to enable multi-year contractor and sponsorship arrangements that help to ensure the financial stability of the organization and to protect the social value of the event as outlined in paragraphs 3.4-3.7. This mirrors the structure agreed pre-COVID
- 1.3 In the intervening years since the last review the events industry has experienced an unprecedented negative impact in the form of the COVID19 Pandemic and continues to experience both supply side and consumer pressure due to the growing cost of living crisis. This culminated in 2023 when bad weather and a cancellation of rail services resulted in an extremely challenging year for Brighton and Hove Pride CIC (BPCIC) resulting in a substantial financial loss.
- 1.4 This report sets out the unique national identity of the Pride celebrations in the city and requests permission to agree a five-year landlords consent arrangement for the Parade, Preston Park and Village Street Party activations, with an agreed income recuperation model for Brighton and Hove City Council over the next 5 years.
- 1.5 Landlords consent is required for all City events to take place on public land and is the first stage before an event receives full approval. Once consent is granted all events are required to meet the conditions of the license to use public land which including the presentation of detailed event plans which must be agreed by the council and other statutory partners. Event organisers are also required to engage effectively with the City events SAG (Safety Advisory Group) through meetings and correspondence to ensure all

plans are suitably scrutinised. The council withholds the right to withdraw consent at any time if the high standards set out in the license and events charter are not met.

- 1.6 The report also requests that the committee delegates authority to officers to continue looking at how the events which make up the current Pride CIC celebrations might evolve across the five-year term, and the potential developments and partnerships required in order to bid for and deliver Euro Pride in 2030 as detailed in paragraphs 3.32 and 3.33.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Committee agrees to grant landlord's consent from 2024-2028 to Brighton and Hove Pride CIC (BPCIC) to continue to deliver the Pride Parade, Village Street party and Preston Park activities.
- 2.2 That Committee agrees to implement the charging structure set out at paragraph 3.9.
- 2.3 That Committee agrees to allow BPCIC to utilise the Preston Park site for an additional weekend each year in principal, subject to a full community consultation process and a clear event plan, as outlined in paragraphs 3.15-3.18 below.
- 2.4 That the committee delegates authority to the Executive Director of Economy, Environment and Culture in consultation with the chair of this committee, to vary consent for the Pride Celebration events as laid out in paragraphs 3.10-3.31 below.

3. Context and background information

3.1 Background

Pride has been an annual event in the city for over 30 years and is the largest event hosted by the city of Brighton and Hove. It takes place on the first weekend of August and is now one of the largest Pride events in Europe attracting local regional, national and international visitors to the city. This brings additional revenue economic growth for accommodation providers and the business sector who have a guaranteed income from the many visitors to the city over Pride weekend.

- 3.2 The weekend is made up of a number of key events across the city including:
 - the Pride LGBTQ parade on Saturday afternoon,
 - the Fabuloso festival in Preston Park on Saturday and Sunday
 - Pride Street Party on Saturday and Sunday
 - the Pride Community Parade
 - the Pride Dog Show and
 - the two week cultural programme across the city, in the build up to the weekend, with an exhibition in Jubilee Library.

- 3.3 BPCIC lead and deliver the Pride weekend. They have a longstanding relationship with BHCC and are a well-established homegrown organisation that has a good track record of working in collaboration with Brighton & Hove City Council, Sussex Police, city wide emergency services, health partners and transport providers.
- 3.4 BPCIC place LGBTQ+ rights at the core of their work and have a proven commitment to the city's LGBTQ community, alongside their commitment to community fundraising. This is demonstrated by the funds raised for the Brighton Rainbow Fund, an organisation that awards grants to the LGBTQ+ groups that provide services all year round.
- 3.5 **Community Investment Programmes**
Alongside Pride Events delivery, BPCIC has raised and distributed over £1,236,000 million to local charities and community groups.
- The Rainbow Fund distributes the donations from Brighton Pride CIC. Grants are awarded to LGBTQ+ and HIV groups and organisations in Brighton & Hove.
 - In addition, The Pride Social Impact Fund supports a range of local groups and their activities who are based across Brighton & Hove from Portslade to Saltdean.
 - The Pride Cultural Development fund supports local artists and facilitates their participation in the Pride cultural programme with exhibitions and live performances hosted at Ironworks Studios, Jubilee Library and Brighton University.
- 3.6 **Economic Impact**
The annual weekend Pride Festival brings a massive boost to the City's economy. In 2018 an estimated £20,500,000+ of revenue came from visitors to the city who attended Pride events and other city celebrations. Pride have committed to carrying out a new economic impact assessment in 2025 to demonstrate how Brighton Pride has built on the above figure and continues to contribute to building and supporting a vibrant economy here in Brighton & Hove.
- 3.7 **City Angels**
In 2019 Pride introduced the City Angels scheme to engage with businesses across the city who pay a financial contribution that helps support the Pride Big Beach Clean and other initiatives over Pride weekend.
- 3.8 The launch of City Angels initiative saw a first year sign up of 26 businesses that brought in a further £10,750.00 of fundraising. Pride will relaunch this initiative in 2025 so that more businesses who share the economic benefits of the Pride weekend join with Pride to further contribute to the social impact that this headline event bring to the wider city business sector.
- 3.9 **Financial Sustainability**
Due, in part, to highly volatile operating conditions post pandemic with rising overheads and additional pressures due to major transport strikes and inclement weather it is important that the structure of the Pride weekend is reviewed to ensure a sustainable model for the future. Paragraphs 3.6-3.9

demonstrate the very positive impact on a wide range of organisations that stems directly from the current scale of activity over the Pride weekend. Any considerations for the shape and model of the Pride weekend events that come from the consultations and analysis recommended in this report must take this into consideration.

3.10 2024-2028 Proposals

Central to the proposals for 2024-2028 is ensuring that BHCC can recover all costs from the event, via a more appropriate charging regime to BPCIC. Based on 2023 estimates from all City departments the total cost to the Council is currently in the region of £100,000 annually. The proposal is that BPCIC should pay £100,000 per year, this will be achieved in year 3 so that for years 3,4,5 the Council will collect £300,000 in total. Given the exceptionally difficult operating environment through the Pandemic and subsequent financial pressure from poor weather and significant rail disruption it is acknowledged that this may be a more realistic target. The council and BPCIC will agree a fee structure for the first two years.

3.11 THE PROGRAMME 2024-2028

Paragraphs 3.10-3.31 outline the ongoing proposals for the Pride activity across the city, both as part of the Pride weekend and throughout the year via the community programme.

3.12 Community Parade

A community parade event held in the city centre on Pride Saturday. The parade is a free open access event for city residents and visitors to attend. This would continue to take place on the Saturday of Pride weekend.

3.13 Parade Route

The route, designed to maintain the high profile and visibility of the event alongside the associated safety of spectators and parade participants, would be as follows.

Line up: Hove Lawns and Hove promenade

Parade route: Peace Statue/ Kingsway /West St./Clocktower/North St/North along A259 to Preston Park this route would be subject to any development initiatives led by the council and Pride would work closely with the events office and highway events team to agree the route each year.

Plans for 2024 will include a proposed change to the start time to 10.30am
Fixed road closures to run 9am – 5pm in the city centre on the parade route including agreed diversions to facilitate the parade through the city. The closure from 9am would allow time to safely set out barriers at all key junctions ahead of the parade leaving Hove Lawns.

3.14 Parade participants pay an entry fee to be part of the parade. Fees are based on the type of group or organisation; priority is given to locally based LGBTQ+ groups and charities these groups that want to be in the parade are guaranteed a place. Fees are on a sliding scale with community paying less and corporates paying more so that LGBTQ+ groups are subsidised by the higher paying organisations.

- 3.15 Pride would continue to engage in early planning meetings with public transport providers and highways events on an agreed traffic management plan and associated road closures and share this with B&H Buses to communicate the TM plan including diversions regarding bus related services while road closures are in place.
- 3.16 **Preston Park 2024**
In 2024 BPCIC will deliver the traditional Pride Weekend festival with the possible addition of a smaller Friday night launch event in the park.
- 3.17 **Preston Park 2025 onwards**
From 2025 BPCIC are proposing a new vision working with BHCC to develop events over two weekends starting at the end of July and concluding the first full weekend in August. The traditional Pride Saturday will still fall on the first weekend of August with the other dates being programmed to offer a full line up of Friday Saturday & Sunday performances and sharing the significant overall infrastructure costs with other event partners. The additional weekend, while managed by BPCIC as a mechanism to reduce financial risk, will not be part of the City Pride celebrations and will be independently branded and promoted. It will create an income for Pride to support their longer term sustainability.
- 3.18 The build period for this new approach would begin in July 2025 with the dates being agreed with the events team prior to each year. It is envisioned that the build would take place in two phases allowing an area of the park to remain as public open space during the days between the two weekends. Following on from the first weekend the infrastructure and tents would remain in place and Pride plan to explore a local programme of midweek community activities and events for children young people and the local residents of Brighton and Hove. EG. Possible activities could include circus skills workshops, children's shows and performances, horticultural talks and comedy nights. This would allow for much better public access to and use of the park/event site between each weekend.
- 3.19 Greater utilization of the Park over the Pride fortnight has the potential to lessen the impact on local residents keeping activity to a specific period of the summer. In recent years the Preston Park events programme has extended across the Spring and Summer months. As part of the wider Major Events Review coming in 2024 this approach may see a move to reducing the use of Preston Park for outdoor events to a defined period of the year.
- 3.20 The extended Preston Park events site concept would be developed in 2024 and a full detailed plan developed with full stakeholder involvement. During this time BPCIC will also work closely with the local authority on developing a model that will generate income back to the council over the five year period. A plan would be brought back to Committee in Autumn 2024.
- 3.21 **Pride Village Party 2024-2028**
Proposed times of the PVP 2024 - 2028
Saturday 5pm – 11pm and Sunday 4pm – 10pm (tbc)

A fenced and ticketed event that has for the past ten years taken place on, St James St & Marine Parade with the inclusion of side roads in this locality.

- 3.22 Further to a short review of the August festival in 2023, it is clear that more work is needed with partners in the coming year to explore options that improve the experience and safety of the Party for its visitors, residents and local businesses. In 2024 the final event footprint is to be agreed and the event management plan will reflect and contain all agreed conditions of delivery. It is the intention to move the box office function for this event from Victoria Gardens to sit closer to the footprint. A further review across 2024 will identify options for the Street Party, to be implemented from 2025 onwards.
- 3.23 2023 has seen a significant increase in public scrutiny of this event and post pandemic requests for free residential and business wristbands have increased 300% since the launch in 2014. In response to this pressure, limits have been applied to free wristband allocations to business, residential and guest properties. This continues to be an unpopular measure with some business owners and residents. A review of the wristband scheme is proposed for 2024 as set out at para 3.28-9. The residents newsletter outlining the 2023 system can be seen at **Appendix 2**.
- 3.24 The costs carried by BPCIC are considerable and have extended over the years. Paragraphs 3.24-3.26 details additional costs that previously fell to the council but are now paid by the CIC via the wristband charging scheme.
- 3.25 *Stewarding and traffic management*
BPCIC picked up security and stewarding from 2014 and traffic management from 2015. 2023 costs for both security, stewarding and traffic management are set out below.
Security & Stewarding - £85,319.50
Traffic Management - £4,988.50
- 3.26 *Council Resident Liaison PVP*
BPCIC picked up these costs from 2015
Pride cost 2023
Live Event Days - £1500
Pre event liaison - £6,800
- 3.27 *Street cleaning*
BPCIC picked up these costs from 2016 paying a fee to city clean then we stepped away from this and took on the full-scale management of street cleansing across the PVP footprint.
Cost in 2023
Road Sweepers £16,668.50
Waste management, bins across the event site and waste disposal £4,675
Litter Pickers - £5,820.00
Total: 27,163.50
- 3.28 *Audience and Visitors*

Additional concerns have been raised about the nature and ‘tone’ of the event which continues to attract significant crowds but with a very different demographic to the Park events. Overall, however, there has been no significant change in the level of formal complaints to the council compared to the pre-2019 review levels.

- 3.29 It is proposed in the recommendations that a further consultation led by the City Council with BPCIC, to mirror the extensive consultation carried out in 2019 should be carried out by officers to look at the size, footprint and nature of the event with an aim to improve sustainability, residential impact and to better fit the changing nature of residential properties and the expansion of Air B&B style businesses that can often have a high turnover of guests. NB: Proposals currently being considered for 2024 include distribution of wristbands directly to bookers via Air BnB owners to ensure residents have access to properties while minimizing the risk of wristbands becoming available for resale.
- 3.30 A resident and business’s forum for the Kemptown area has been scheduled for early December where proposals will be shared and consulted on with relevant parties to agree a mechanism for 2024.
- 3.31 **Pride Campsite Waterhall: Wednesday – Wednesday**
BPCIC propose the continued use of Waterhall recreation ground and changing facilities as the Pride Campsite. Campsite opening would be from Midday on Friday – Midday Monday with days either side for build and break.
- 3.32 **Pride Arts & Culture Festival**
Pride Community Foundation CIC was set up as a separate entity in 2019 after the hugely successful pilot of the black-led Pride Cultural Development Programme (PCDP) - an initiative established to support a creative ambition to engage an even broader cross-section of the community as artists, participants and audiences. This work empowers diverse communities to get involved on their own terms and to tell their own stories in their own way. The foundation will continue to develop these initiatives to enhance access to opportunity in the arts for marginalized communities over the next five years.
- 3.33 **Pride Community Day & Dog Show**
Post the main events BPCIC would wish to deliver a free community day and dog show event to be held in Preston Park. *Date to be confirmed.*
- 3.34 **Overarching vision**
In addition to the above continuing activities over the pride weekend and through the year, the council, working closely with BPCIC are also looking to start the process of creating community working groups with the intention of making an application to host EuroPride potentially in 2030. EuroPride is a pan-European celebration of the LGBTQI+ community and would involve a far wider community reach and engagement to deliver. Including opening and closing ceremonies and an associated human rights conference.

- 3.35 The process for preparing a bid would present an excellent opportunity for the City and BPCIC to engage across the City and review the opportunities and impacts of the Pride celebrations in a wider context, and understand wider opportunities for recognizing and celebrating LGBTQi+ communities.

4. Analysis and consideration of alternative options

- 4.1 The pride weekend celebrations are a flagship event for the city and generate considerable positive economic and community impacts. As such it is felt that the council should continue to nurture the activities and ensure they continue to offer their substantial benefits. It is plausible to consider a reduction in the scale of the weekend events to reduce the negative impacts on the wider city community, but this would have a commensurate impact on the positive reputational and economic impacts for the wider City economy.
- 4.2 There may be consideration to look to maintain the park and Village party activities to their current scale and design. While this approach has merit as there is a proved model that has worked for over 10 years this does not take into the account the significant pressure recent, more challenging, years has demonstrated the fragility of budgets when focused on a specific day and the plans above seek to diversify the risk to ensure a more robust financial position going forward.

5. Community engagement and consultation

- 5.1 A series of debrief sessions and community engagement in and around the footprint of BPCIC activities takes place on an annual basis. This includes business and resident forum meetings in Kemptown.
- 5.2 In addition to the BPCIC activities the Outdoor Events Department have instigated a series of quarterly meetings with residents and businesses in all key event locations in the city. These forums have Pride weekend as a standing item on the agenda and representatives of the council and BPCIC are in attendance.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The city pride celebrations continue to be a highlight of the City events ecosystem. It is also a demonstration of the Cities commitment to being a diverse and inclusive place to live, visit and to do business in. The recommendations in this report are designed to ensure a robust future for the event and allowing the primary organisers, BPCIC to continue to deliver and evolve an exciting and complimentary programme of events.
- 6.2 The forward vision contained in this report also opens a unique opportunity to review the diversity of the communities in the city and to re-engage on a wide platform in order to ensure all future developments are devised and refined with a broad consensus.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 Fees for this type of event would normally be charged in accordance with the Outdoor Events Policy, with any costs incurred being the responsibility of the organiser including road closures, parking bay suspensions, any costs of stewarding the event and rubbish clearance. Over recent years BPCIC have been taking on some costs from the council that has been possible from incomes on the wristband charging scheme, however it is estimated that total costs to the council are still in the region of £0.100m annually as per **Appendix 1**. It is proposed that agreement is reached regarding a charging structure over a three-year period to collect the council's annual running costs of the event, where by 2026 the full cost is recovered on an ongoing basis.

Name of finance officer consulted: John Lack Date consulted: 23/11/2023

8. Legal implications

- 8.1 A Licence will be entered into which will make clear the responsibilities for the organisers. The Council will be required to make relevant road closures orders for the purpose of the safe management of the event.

Name of lawyer consulted: Elizabeth Culbert Date consulted (27/11/2023)

9. Equalities implications

- 9.1 **Community Accessibility**
To ensure community access there are a number of ways that the community in Brighton & Hove can access Pride events. Early Bird tickets are low cost and are available when the event goes on sale. We have a low-income ticket scheme that is available in the weeks leading up to the event. Volunteering opportunities with the parade team and the box office which gives each volunteer a free ticket to the event of their choice. LGBTQ+ groups and organisations.
- 9.2 **Disability Access**
Since 2015 the CIC access, welfare and disability services have been reviewed and enhanced. We have a dedicated access support manager and team who are on site to manage the access tent and to direct and support access customers on the day.
- 9.3 **Trans Equality**
Trans and queer performers are an integral part of the festival weekend programming. Pride also support Trans Pride and the delivery of their event in the city.

10. Sustainability implications

- 10.1 BPCIC is committed to improving their environmental impact continue to work towards reducing single use plastics and carbon emissions across all sites. BPCIC are working with the council to support the installation of clean

energy on Preston park so that the use of generators can be significantly reduced.

11. Other Implications

Crime & disorder implications:

- 11.1 Due to the large scale of the Pride weekend activities across the City, there is an unavoidable impact on crime and disorder. It is important to note, however, that there is a significant joint operation between the council, BPCIC through their private security contracts and Sussex Police that is constantly reviewed to ensure the best possible safety outcomes for all attendees and City residents.
- 11.2 Over recent years, due to the collaborative approach to safety and security across the weekend there has been a consistent drop in crime and disorder across all events in comparison to previous years.

Public health implications:

- 11.3 Given the significant increase in population across the City during the Pride weekend there is inevitably a significant increase in demand for Health services. Throughout the year there are regular meetings with the council public health representatives, NHS Commissioners, Sussex University Hospitals Trust and ambulance services to mitigate any impact on business-as-usual services.
- 11.4 Across all sites operated by BPCIC, and across the city at large, there is a significant operation mounted by St John Ambulance services to augment the services usually provided in the city. Costs for this are met by BPCIC and there would have to be very careful consideration on the possible impacts to health services in the city if this was not provided.
- 11.5 It has been reported over several years that the advance triage offered by St John as part of their provision have often reduced strain on A&E services in comparison to business as usual.

Supporting Documentation

1. Appendices

- 1. Breakdown of Brighton & Hove City Council Costs
- 2. Residents Newsletter for Pride Village Party
- 3. Pride Programmes Brochure
- 4. Detailed proposal from BPCIC